

Improvements in Facilities, Communications, and Equipment at Biological Field Stations and Marine Laboratories (FSML)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION

NSF 05-550

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):

NSF 04-543



National Science Foundation

Directorate for Biological Sciences
Division of Biological Infrastructure

Directorate for Geosciences
Division of Ocean Sciences

Full Proposal Target Date(s):

April 26, 2005

March 03, 2006

First Friday in March, Annually Thereafter

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

A revised version of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPP)*, [NSF 09-1](#), was issued on October 1, 2008 and is effective for proposals submitted on or after January 5, 2009. Please be advised that the guidelines contained in [NSF 09-1](#) apply to proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity. Proposers who opt to submit prior to January 5th, 2009, must also follow the guidelines contained in [NSF 09-1](#).

One of the most significant changes to the PAPP is implementation of the mentoring provisions of the America COMPETES Act. Each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include, as a separate section within the 15-page project description, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. Proposals that do not include a separate section on mentoring activities within the Project Description will be returned without review (see the PAPP Guide Part I: *Grant Proposal Guide* Chapter II.C.2.d for further information).

There are two significant revisions to the previous program solicitation. The requirement for cost sharing has been eliminated. The upper limit for funds that may be requested is now \$350,000, except that requests for planning grants are limited to \$25,000.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

Improvements in Facilities, Communications, and Equipment at Biological Field Stations and Marine Laboratories (FSML)

Synopsis of Program:

Biological Field Stations and Marine Laboratories (FSMLs) are off-campus facilities for research and education conducted in the natural habitats of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. FSMLs support biological research and education by preserving access to study areas and organisms, by providing facilities and equipment in close proximity to those study areas, and by fostering an atmosphere of mutual scientific interest and collaboration in research and education. To fulfill these roles, FSMLs must offer modern laboratories and educational spaces, up-to-date equipment, appropriate personal accommodations for visiting scientists and students, and modern communications and data management systems for a broad array of users. In recognition of the importance of FSMLs in modern biology, NSF invites proposals that address these general goals of FSML improvement.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Peter McCartney, Directorate for Biological Sciences, Division of Biological Infrastructure, telephone: (703) 292-8470, fax: (703) 292-9063, email: biofsm1@nsf.gov
- Kandace Binkley, Directorate for Geosciences, Division of Ocean Sciences, telephone: (703) 292-8583, fax: (703) 292-9085, email: biofsm1@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.050 --- Geosciences
- 47.074 --- Biological Sciences

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: 15 to 20 Approximately 15 - 20 new awards annually, including 3 - 5 awards for planning grants, with the exact number dependent on the quality of the proposals received and the amounts requested.

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$2,300,000 Approximately \$2.3 million annually, subject to the availability of funds.

Eligibility Information

Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Proposals are accepted from U.S. colleges and universities, free-standing research and education institutions, and U.S. chartered corporations with formally constituted research and education programs at off-campus field stations or marine laboratories. To qualify for support through the FSML program, the research and education activities at the proposing facility must focus primarily on study of biological phenomena and organisms in natural habitats, or on study of organisms whose availability for research depends upon the existence of the facility. A significant fraction of the research and education projects that use the proposing facility as a platform for their execution should be in science and engineering fields eligible for support by the National Science Foundation. Facilities whose primary focus is on precollege or informal education, or on agriculture, aquaculture, or mariculture are not usually considered to be field stations or marine laboratories.

PI Limit:

None Specified

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

Only one proposal may be submitted on behalf of any single facility per round of the FSML competition. This limitation does not prevent a single institution from submitting more than one proposal, as long as each proposal is submitted on behalf of a different eligible facility.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:

None Specified

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not Applicable
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not Applicable
- **Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** This solicitation contains information that supplements the standard NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required under this solicitation.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s):**
 - April 26, 2005
 - March 03, 2006
 - First Friday in March, Annually Thereafter

Proposal Review Information Criteria

Merit Review Criteria: National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

Award Administration Information

Award Conditions: Standard NSF award conditions apply.

Reporting Requirements: Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Biological Field Stations and Marine Laboratories (FSMLs) are off-campus facilities for research and education conducted in the natural habitats of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. FSMLs support biological research and education by preserving access to study areas and organisms, by providing facilities and equipment in close proximity to those study areas, and by fostering an atmosphere of mutual scientific interest and collaboration in research and education. For FSMLs to fulfill their role in biological research and education, they must offer modern laboratories and educational spaces, up-to-date equipment, appropriate personal accommodations for visiting scientists and students, and modern communications and data management systems for a broad array of users.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In recognition of the continuing need for modernization of facilities and equipment at FSMLs, the NSF invites proposals that address the general goal of FSML improvement. Proposals should focus on well-defined projects of physical plant improvement, major equipment acquisition, data management and communication systems modernization, or institutional planning for such needs. In addition to a clear description of the proposed improvement or planning project, proposals are expected to present a compelling justification based on demonstrated need for the project, and a realistic appraisal of its potential impact on biological research and education activities at the proposing facility.

Proposals may include one or more of the following elements, except that requests for support of planning efforts may not be combined with requests for other types of improvements:

- Improvements in the physical plant of a field station or marine laboratory. Funds may be requested for renovation of existing structures or for construction of new structures to be used for research, for associated training and education responsibilities, or for personal accommodations intended for visiting scientists and students. Requests for improvement of facilities or equipment used for research or educational activities to be carried out on board a UNOLS (University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System) research ship or similar vessel are inappropriate.
- Equipment purchase. Such requests should focus on major, multi-user or general use items (including special purpose vehicles and boats) that are essential to the facility's research agenda and associated training and education programs. Requests for extensive sets of small items are discouraged.
- Improvements in data management and communication systems. Such requests should be directed at deployment of appropriate, up-to-date technology and should be directed toward broad community use of such systems for research and education collaboration on the Internet. Requests for ongoing costs of operations, including staffing and fees for telecommunications services, are inappropriate.
- Institutional planning. Such requests should address the need for comprehensive planning at the level of the whole station or laboratory in support of its research and training mission. The effort should produce plans useful throughout at least a five-year time frame. Planning proposals may address, but are not limited to, facility needs appraisal and design activities, and research/training program development. Proposed activities will normally be cast in the format of workshops, conferences, and visits designed to involve broad participation of the scientific community outside the proposing institution. Requests for support of planning efforts should not be combined with requests for support of equipment acquisition or other improvements. Award of a planning grant does not imply an NSF commitment beyond the planning period.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES:

Although the primary purpose of the FSML program is to aid in the improvement of physical facilities and equipment at biological field research facilities, the complete agenda for the program is broader in concept. The program expects that the projects it supports will assist the users of FSMLs to achieve new and higher levels of collaboration on both scientific and educational fronts. The program's emphasis on modernization of data management and communication systems is expected to foster opportunities for expanded spatial and temporal scales of research, and to facilitate substantive comparisons among biological entities in different biomes. It is likely that new collaborations among scientists, across disciplines and in different locations will grow from this emphasis, and that increased access to data sets will provide the impetus for new directions of scientific inquiry.

III. AWARD INFORMATION

Estimated program budget, number of awards and average award size are subject to the availability of funds.

Proposals may request up to \$350,000, except that requests for planning grants are limited to \$25,000. The program expects to make, on an annual basis, approximately 15 - 20 new standard and continuing grants totaling \$2.3 million in their initial year, of which 3 - 5 will be planning grants. Most awards will have durations of 36 months. The exact number of grants, and their durations, will depend on the quality of the proposals received and the funds and durations requested. The anticipated start date for awards is seven months from the annual target date for receipt of proposals.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Proposals are accepted from U.S. colleges and universities, free-standing research and education institutions, and U.S. chartered corporations with formally constituted research and education programs at off-campus field stations or marine laboratories. To qualify for support through the FSML program, the research and education activities at the proposing facility must focus primarily on study of biological phenomena and organisms in natural habitats, or on study of organisms whose availability for research depends upon the existence of the facility. A significant fraction of the research and education projects that use the proposing facility as a platform for their execution should be in science and engineering fields eligible for support by the National Science Foundation. Facilities whose primary focus is on precollege or informal education, or on agriculture, aquaculture, or mariculture are not usually considered to be field stations or marine laboratories.

PI Limit:

None Specified

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

Only one proposal may be submitted on behalf of any single facility per round of the FSML competition. This limitation does not prevent a single institution from submitting more than one proposal, as long as each proposal is submitted on behalf of a different eligible facility.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:

None Specified

Additional Eligibility Info:

Proposals are accepted from U.S. colleges and universities, free-standing research and education institutions, and U.S. chartered corporations with formally constituted research and education programs at off-campus field stations or marine laboratories. To qualify for support through the FSML program, the research and education activities at the proposing facility must focus primarily on study of biological phenomena and organisms in natural habitats, or on study of organisms whose availability for research depends upon the existence of the facility. A significant fraction of the research and education projects that use the proposing facility as a platform for their execution should be in fields of science and engineering eligible for support by the National Science Foundation.

An individual may be PI or coPI on more than one proposal; however, only one proposal may be submitted on behalf of an eligible facility per round of the FSML competition. This limitation does not prevent a single institution from submitting more than one proposal, as long as each is submitted on behalf of a different eligible facility.

Facilities whose primary focus is on precollege or informal education, or on agriculture, aquaculture, or mariculture are not usually considered to be field stations or marine laboratories.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal Instructions: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidelines specified in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-PUBS (7827) or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

In developing the proposal, please keep in mind the review criteria that will be used to evaluate the proposal. As discussed below (Section VI.), these include the two National Science Board approved review criteria (Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts) as well as the Additional Review Criteria specific to FSML proposals.

The following instructions supplement the GPG guidelines. The proposal must include the following elements:

1. Project Summary: This section must include separate statements describing the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts of the project.
2. Project Description: This section must provide the information outlined in items a. through j. that follow immediately below; the information should be provided in the order described. The section is limited to 15 pages, including any tables, lists or

graphical material.

- a. Basic description of the existing station or laboratory, including its capabilities for supporting scientific research and training. Such information may include site history, facility administration, research areas, buildings, equipment, access and transportation, automated data acquisition systems, data management and communications equipment, staffing, and other items of interest such as unique aspects of the ecosystems and organisms that can be accessed through the station or laboratory.
 - b. Proposed improvements or planning efforts with justification based upon current or projected research and training needs. The description should include sufficient detail to enable reviewers to judge their likely adequacy in meeting these needs, as well as a brief discussion of the manner in which the needs were identified. Special care should be taken to describe how the improvements will benefit visiting scientists and students. Requests for equipment purchase should describe provisions for equipment maintenance.
 - c. Research and training use of the facility during the most recent five-year period, including scientist and student use days on an annual basis, research projects supported, any courses (both academic and public) conducted, any special activities hosted (e.g. workshops, conferences), number of day visitors etc.
 - d. Summary of the most significant research and training accomplishments attributable to the facility during the most recent five-year period.
 - e. Broader Impacts of the proposed project. Some examples of Broader Impacts can be found on the NSF web site at:
<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2003/nsf032/bicexamples.pdf>.
 - f. Brief description of the "Results from Prior NSF Support." This should report only the results of FSML awards to the proposing facility during the previous five-year period (irrespective of the identity of the PIs).
 - g. Selected bibliography (maximum of 10 complete references) of the most significant research publications attributable to research conducted at the facility during the most recent five-year period. Other relevant publications may be summarized in tabular format as counts of particular types of publications. Any specific references needed to support details of the proposed efforts should be provided in the proposal section entitled "References Cited."
 - h. Summary of station or laboratory policies with respect to data collection and management, including provisions governing archiving and sharing of data. Mechanisms for providing access to data, including use of databases and standard communications protocols where appropriate, should be mentioned.
 - i. Fee Schedule. List fees for use of the facility. Please indicate if no fees are charged. Expected impact on the fee structure due to the proposed improvements should be detailed.
 - j. Other items of importance not specifically indicated above.
3. References Cited: Any references used to justify or otherwise support the details of the proposed project should be provided in this section.
4. Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources: This section should be left blank as this information should be included as part of the required content of the Project Description section.
5. Budget and Budget Justification: The budget should clearly identify funds in each category of the Fastlane budget form. The amount of funds requested may not exceed \$350,000, except that requests for support of planning efforts are limited to \$25,000. Except in unusual circumstances, the program expects to make standard or continuing grants with durations of up to 36 months. Thus all funds should be requested in the budget for year one, with zero funds requested in budgets for subsequent years. The cumulative budget is completed automatically by FastLane. Proposers who intend to request an award duration greater than 36 months should first contact an FSML program director for guidance.
- The budget justification page should be used to provide details of project costs in each budget category, if these are not described elsewhere in the proposal. Multiple items of equipment, if requested, should be listed on the justification page with individual costs identified. Allocation of funds to be provided through subcontracts or consulting arrangements should be described. A separate budget form is required for each subcontract.
- The program does not normally provide direct support for salaries of senior staff or for administrative support. No funds for a construction contingency may be included as costs of the proposed project. No cost sharing is required. However, in the event that the funds requested of NSF are less than the overall cost of the proposed project, the source(s) of the additional funds must be specified in the budget justification, and appropriate documentation of the availability of the additional funds must be provided in the "Special Information and Supplementary Documentation" section. Any funds provided by sources other than NSF are not auditable by NSF. When a proposed project requires other sources of funding, the scope and cost of the entire project must be provided in enough detail to identify the work to be performed and/or funded by parties other than NSF. Reviewers will need this additional information in order to assess the viability of the overall project, as well as the scope and budget to be funded by NSF.
6. Special Information and Supplementary Documentation: This section is limited to the following types of documentation, as appropriate. The documents should be provided by scanning and inserting as a PDF. Other types of information, including copies of brochures or other information about the proposing facility, may not be included.
- a. "Certification of Flood Protection" as required under the Flood Disaster and Protection Act of 1973. Proposals requesting funds for new construction or physical plant renovation must certify that the facility is not in a special flood hazard area identified by HUD or, if the facility is in such an area, certify that adequate flood insurance under this act has been obtained (see NSF Grant Policy Manual, section 723).
 - b. Copies of site plans, building floorplans, vendor/builder quotes, price quotes for equipment items costing over \$5000, and architectural/engineering statements, as relevant.
 - c. Letters of collaboration or resource commitment, including commitments for any additional funds other than those requested of NSF, as noted in item 5 above. Other than these, no letters of support may be provided.

Proposers are reminded to identify the program solicitation number (NSF 05-550) in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing: Cost sharing is not required under this solicitation.

Other Budgetary Limitations:

Requests are limited to \$350,000, except that awards for support of planning efforts are limited to \$25,000. See instructions for proposal preparation.

Budget Preparation Instructions:

Requests for more than \$250,000 should be discussed in advance with cognizant program staff.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s):**

April 26, 2005

March 03, 2006

First Friday in March, Annually Thereafter

D. FastLane Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this program solicitation through use of the NSF FastLane system. Detailed instructions regarding the technical aspects of proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail fastlane@nsf.gov. The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.

VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program where they will be reviewed if they meet NSF proposal preparation requirements. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal.

A. NSF Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board (NSB)-approved merit review criteria: intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed effort. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two NSB-approved merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which the reviewer is qualified to make judgments.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts are available electronically on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf>.

Mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers supported on the project, as described in a one-page supplementary document, will be evaluated under the Broader Impacts criterion.

NSF staff also will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

Integration of Research and Education

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

Additional Review Criteria:

Consistent with the general NSF review criteria elaborated above, the evaluation of FSML proposals will center upon the following aspects of the proposed project:

1. Intrinsic merit of the proposed improvements or planning efforts in enhancing research and training activities at the proposing facility, including the quality and amount of data that can be collected and archived;
2. Thoroughness and appropriateness of the planning or needs assessment effort that led to the specific request;
3. Need for, and adequacy of the justification for, the proposed improvements in terms of the research and training missions of the proposing facility;
4. Significance and uniqueness of the facility's current and potential impact on the progress of biological research and education at local, regional and national levels;
5. Likely impact of the project on the improvement of biological research and training at the facility;
6. Likely impact of the proposed activity on the ability of the facility to accommodate visiting scientists and students;
7. Research and training productivity of the facility during the most recent five-year period;
8. Scope, utility and accessibility of data collected at the site, including the existence of well-defined data management and data sharing policies, and the utilization of standard communications protocols.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1); * or Research Terms and Conditions * and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Award & Administration Guide* (AAG) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require more frequent project reports). Within 90 days after expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through FastLane, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on activities and findings, project participants (individual and organizational) publications; and, other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system. Submission of the report via FastLane constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Peter McCartney, Directorate for Biological Sciences, Division of Biological Infrastructure, telephone: (703) 292-8470, fax: (703) 292-9063, email: biofsm1@nsf.gov
- Kandace Binkley, Directorate for Geosciences, Division of Ocean Sciences, telephone: (703) 292-8583, fax: (703) 292-9085, email: biofsm1@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

The NSF Website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this Website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, National Science Foundation Update is a free e-mail subscription service designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF Regional Grants Conferences. Subscribers are informed through e-mail when new publications are issued that match their identified interests. Users can subscribe to this service by clicking the "Get NSF Updates by Email" link on the [NSF web site](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this new mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 40,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II, Section D.2 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

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